

**PUTNAM COUNTY LEGISLATURE
PUBLIC HEARING
ON THE
2022 TENTATIVE BUDGET
AND
REPORT OF THE BUDGET & FINANCE COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE
HISTORIC COURTHOUSE
CARMEL, NEW YORK 10512**

Tuesday October 26, 2021 7:00 P.M.

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 P.M. by Chairwoman Addonizio who requested Legislator Castellano lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call, Legislators Montgomery, Gouldman, Nacerino, Albano, Jonke, Castellano, Sayegh, Sullivan and Chairwoman Addonizio were present. Also present was Legislative Counsel Firriolo.

Chairwoman Addonizio requested that the Clerk read the Public Notice (attached).

Chairwoman Addonizio read the procedure for public comment on the proposed 2022 Tentative Budget.

Ms. Lynne Eckardt from Town of Southeast believed it was unreasonable that the County budget is going up by 2.3% for 2022. She stated that the Town of Southeast budget will be decreased by 1%. She stated that in the surrounding counties there will be no increase, or in the case of Dutchess County, the budget will be reduced by 10%. She stated that in addition, sales tax on clothing and footwear costing less than \$110.00 will be eliminated. She stated that combined, there will be a savings of \$20 million for Dutchess County taxpayers. She stated that Rockland County and Orange County will not have a property tax increase and although Westchester County's has not been released yet, they have been told their property tax will not be increased. She believed another part of all this that is important to her is that all these other counties that are not increasing their budgets share their sales tax. She stated that she did not know how much was left in the County's fund balance right now. She stated that to date it seems like the sales tax revenue for 2021, despite COVID-19, are projected to be \$8 million over 2020. She provided an example of the taxes on her house in the Town of Southeast being assessed at \$406,000. She stated that her town taxes are \$784 and her county taxes are \$1,228. She stated that there is a 37% difference between her town taxes and county taxes. She stated that even if she includes her garbage bill, her town taxes are less. She questioned where the \$19 million from the American Rescue Plan is going. She stated that she will be researching her questions herself. She stated though it is late in the budget process, she believed you could all do better, and she did not see how people this year could bear any kind of increase. She stated that she is happy that we are limited to a degree with the tax cap, however she believed there were times, which the Town of Southeast is following, where no increase should be given.

There being no further comments, at 7:09 P.M., Chairwoman Addonizio made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Legislator Sayegh. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Diane Schonfeld, Clerk.